

Frankford Arsenal, Building 29

Southeast corner of Mellon Street and Mordecai Road

Philadelphia

Philadelphia County

Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-74R

HAER
PA,
51-PHILA.
693-R-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Mid-Atlantic Regional Office
National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location: Southeast corner of Mellon Street and Mordecai Road
Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania

Quad: Frankford

Date of Construction: 1899

Significance: This building, almost wholly rebuilt in 1939, reflects the continued development of Frankford Arsenal as the U.S. Army's principal supplier of ammunition, sights, and fire control instruments.

Historian: Patrick W. O'Bannon
Principal Historian
John Milner Associates, Inc.
1216 Arch Street, 5th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

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HISTORY

Building 29 is listed in Frankford Arsenal records as dating from 1899. The 1899 building, constructed as a watchman's house and scale house, measured approximately 10 feet by 30 feet and was oriented east-west. The wood frame building had board-and-batten siding. The arsenal records state that this building was moved to its present location in 1939 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), who reoriented the building in a north-south direction, increased its size to 17 feet by 40 feet, and reconstructed it with a concrete foundation and brick walls. The discrepancies in construction materials, orientation, and dimensions between the 1899 and the 1939 buildings strongly suggest that the present Building 29 was constructed as an entirely new building in 1939, replacing the earlier building. The building was last used as a nursery school.

DESCRIPTION

Building 29 is a single-story building, with a concrete foundation measuring approximately 17 feet by 40 feet. The building is constructed of red brick, laid in Flemish bond. The slate-covered gable roof has a wooden cornice with full returns at the gable ends. The facades are articulated with simple brick corbeling above the window bays. Window openings are rectangular, with soldier course brick jack arches and concrete sills. The sash are six-over-six wooden units. Fanlights, with concrete lintels and keystones, are located in the gable tympanums. Entry doors are located in the north and south elevations.

The interior plan is symmetrical, with offices and weighing rooms against the end walls and a connecting hall flanked on the east by toilet rooms.

SOURCE

John Milner Associates, "Historical and Archeological Survey of Frankford Arsenal," West Chester, PA: John Milner Associates, 1979.

Report prepared for the Department of the Army, Baltimore District, Corps of Engineers, Baltimore, Maryland. Copies on file at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Historical Commission.

For complete overview of site, see HAER No. PA-74.

